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SUBJECT: KOSOVO: UNMIK CIVPOL'S TRANSITION TO AN EU-LED
MISSION

Classified By: COM TINA KAIDANOW FOR REASONS 1.4 (B) AND (D).

¶1. (C) SUMMARY: UNMIK CivPol and the EU Planning Team (EUP T) continue to cooperate on planning for the eventual transfer of the international civilian police mission in Kosovo. UNMIK intends to maintain its authorized CivPol strength of 1,565 until the beginning of the transition, and the EUP T appears confident in UNMIK's ability to deliver on this pledge. The EU's planned police presence, and particularly its executive police numbers, may grow in size as Brussels and EU capitals debate the need for a more robust executive capability, particularly in light of the sensitive security environment still likely to obtain after the UNMIK-to-EU transition period ends and the EU mandate begins. END SUMMARY.

UNMIK Police Confirm: No Plans to Downsize Prior to Transition Period

¶2. (C) In response to questions about UNMIK CivPol numbers and the possibility of a decrease prior to the start-up of the EU follow-on mission, we spoke with representatives from the EUP T and UNMIK's Deputy Police Commissioner for Operations. UNMIK Deputy Police Commissioner for Operations Scott Anderson told us that UNMIK has no plan or schedule to reduce its force prior to the EU takeover. According to Anderson, UNMIK's current authorized strength (technically through 2008) is 1,565, not including roughly 400 officers in "formed police units" (FPUs) for special operations and incidents, such as riot control.

¶4. (C) Anderson told USOP that 80 new CivPol officers (including Americans, Czechs, Brits and Pakistanis) arrived the week of January 29. This will bring UNMIK slightly above its authorized strength of 1,965 officers (including the 400 FPUs). He did add that UNMIK does not plan to approve extensions for some non-EU or non-NATO police contingents past June 2007, since they will not be part of the EU-led mission (and since the quality of their performance in some instances has been subpar), but he noted that there are no numbers associated with this small downsizing since it is not yet official policy. Anderson also noted that UNMIK headquarters had begun to remove certain equipment (office

equipment, telephones and computers) from police substations in North Mitrovica, but said he had stopped the outflow after discussion with the director of UNMIK's Civil Administration.

(Note: UNMIK Mitrovica's Regional Director Gerald Gallucci confirmed to COM February 2 that he was satisfied with the level of UNMIK policing and the mix of police officers in the Mitrovica region.)

EU Policing Numbers May Grow

15. (C) According to the latest information the EUPT has shared with USOP, the police component of the EU follow-on rule of law mission will have 1,064 people, including up to 300-400 officers devoted to crowd and riot control. Roughly 30 percent of officers would have executive functions, with the rest devoted to monitoring and advising the Kosovo Police Service. However, the numbers are still very much in flux. In response to EU capitals' concerns that the security environment post-transition may still be sensitive enough to require a more robust executive presence, EU Planning Team head Casper Klynge (strictly protect) said the EUPT is proposing a 250-person enhancement force with executive powers, while Brussels may add additional requirements to total a 500-strong such force.

Comment

16. (C) Numbers are not and should not be the entire consideration in determining the appropriate international policing presence in Kosovo post-status. A strong executive police model like the one embodied by UNMIK has played an important role in keeping the peace in Kosovo, but it has also hampered the development of a capable, experienced

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police service that can eventually be expected to take the largest role in law enforcement and permit the rational downsizing of international security elements. UNMIK police have not always proven to be effective, and some of its contingents are distinctly under-performing.

17. (C) At the same time, concerns about the post-transition security environment are obviously compelling and require careful consideration of what constitutes an appropriate, but not excessive, international executive police capability. It may be that the additional numbers being contemplated by the EU Planning Team and Brussels offers a way forward in this regard. We would urge, however, that the mentoring/advising component of the EU mission not be discarded or marginalized; local police capacity building will be a central feature of our rule of law efforts in Kosovo, complemented by capacity building in the judiciary and the prosecution. We will continue to monitor policing levels on the ground and sound the alert if gaps appear, though UNMIK-EUPT cooperation continues to appear solid and the planning efforts of both institutions relatively robust. END COMMENT.

18. (SBU) U.S. Office Pristina does not/not clear this cable for release to U.N. Special Envoy Martti Ahtisaari.
KAIDANOW